

# Michigan District, LCMS

The Lord of the Church has given His people the Holy Spirit and a great command. He thereby called the Church to a mission lifestyle of disciple making and promised to be with the Church in this great mission endeavor. Matthew 28:18-20 states, *“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”*

It is the privilege and pleasure of the Michigan District in partnership with its congregations and professional church workers to engage in the mission lifestyle of making disciples of the un-churched and de-churched in our communities. The demographics of the state of Michigan show that over 10,000,000 are un-churched and in most communities the un-churched and de-churched population is about 60%. There is a need to plant new missions!

## What goes into planting a new mission?

The number one core value of the District states: *“Under the Gospel Imperative of the Great Commission, the Michigan District values the planting and development of new congregations and mission societies which result in the generation of a new audience for the Gospel by bringing the message of Jesus Christ to the un-churched and de-churched populations within the State of Michigan.”*

This core value summons the District to give priority to such activities as: Planting new mission congregations; Partnering with mission societies and RSOs; Assisting local congregations and RSOs to call missionary personnel; Calling and deploying missionary personnel to specific mission fields; Multiplying, equipping (through appropriate agencies), certifying, and placing lay missionary personnel; Providing support for existing urban, ethnic, and trans-cultural ministries, and church planting; Continual environmental scanning (demographics) and interpretation of the Michigan mission harvest field; and Encouraging every District congregation to be mission-minded and culturally relevant so as to honor Christ and reach the lost.

The first desired outcome for the Michigan District, as established by its Board of Directors,

states that: the Michigan District congregations are sensitive to those without Christ within their communities and beyond and actively share Christ’s love with them, integrating them into the Body of Christ. A minimum of two new mission churches will be started annually with the expectation of reaching self-supporting status within seven years and other new culturally relevant missions or ministries will be directly started or started through partnerships to effectively reach the Michigan population.

## What is the circuit’s role in mission planting?

Circuits play an important role in the mission planting process. Circuits are contacted and the need and role for a new mission in their respective communities is discussed. Circuit Counselors are asked to sign a Mission Planting Notification and Response Form as the circuits acknowledge the need and desire to have a new mission planted.

## What does a mission plant look like?

The distinction of a mission plant, as stated by LCMS World Mission, looks like this:

Any LCMS intentionally organized gathering of individuals which comes together on a regular basis for the purpose of worshiping and/or study of the Word, AND is intended to grow into an LCMS rostered congregation. This includes (but is not limited to) what are currently considered “Mission Congregations.” -February 21, 2005 Report to COP.

## What are the methods of starting and staffing the new mission?

The District calls and deploys a Missionary-at-Large; the local congregation starts a daughter congregation with or without District support; the

# Church Planting Procedures

by Roosevelt Gray, Jr.

local congregation starts a multi/meta site with or without District support; and the District partners with a Mission Society (POBLO, LATINO, LCM, Ephphatha, Call, etc.) to start a new mission.

## What are the mission steps in start up procedures?

The Michigan District provides a New Church Organizational Folder of 14 Chronological Steps to Organize a New LCMS Congregation and New Mission Planting Life Cycle Training.

The District then works with the mission plant in the calling of a Missionary/Mission Planting Pastor. These steps are taken: the Director of Missions writes a Mission/Missionary Position Description, the Mission Local Launch Team works with the Mission Director, the Mission Director gets a list of possible candidates from the District President and shares the position description with the Mission Local Launch Team.

## What is the cost of starting a new mission?

The District allocates from \$100,000 to \$500,000 to the start-up and life cycle of new missions. Mission funds are allocated by the following three criteria: District Plant, Congregation Partnership, and Mission Society Partnership. All District subsidized congregations will pledge 10% of their Sunday morning offerings to the District.

*First Official Worship Service at Journey of Faith, Byron Center, September 2006.*

## What is the New Mission Planting Life Cycle?

The New Mission Plant consists of the following phases: The New Mission Planting Life Cycle Training has five stages. 1. The Conception Phase (0-3 months), 2. Prenatal Phase (3-6 months), 3. Birthing Phase (6-9 months), 4. Growth Phase (9-12 months), 5. Future Reproduction Phase

Presently there are 20 subsidized regular and cross-cultural missions in the Michigan District. The Lord of the harvest reminds us, *“The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into the harvest field.”*

I pray that these procedures give you an insight on the process of starting new missions and ministries in the District, and as the people of God, you will pray to the Lord of the harvest that our hearts may always see the urgency of seeking the lost through new mission planting, as well as evangelism and outreach among our congregations.

*Rev. Roosevelt Gray, Jr. serves the District as its Mission Director, Urban/Cross Cultural and Campus Ministries.*

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*To make a donation in support of planting new mission congregations please call the Michigan District Development Office at 888.225.2111.*



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